

Why Tito Walked Out

TITOISM AND THE COMINFORM.
By Adam B. Ulam. 243 pp. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press. \$4.

By PHILIP E. MOSELY

ALMOST four years after the ejection of the Communist party of Yugoslavia from the Soviet-led Cominform, the origins and consequences of this striking event are still obscure at many points. Did the break arise from the obtuseness of Soviet bureaucrats and their failure to appraise correctly the inner cohesiveness of the Communist party of Yugoslavia? Or was it an "inevitable" result of the attainment of power by a Communist party through its own efforts and without decisive aid from the Soviet regime?

On the basis of much recently published material, including the resolutions of the C. P. Y. up to 1937 and Tito's appointment as Secretary General, as well as newspapers and periodicals published in Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Poland, Adam B. Ulam has made an acute analysis of the scattered evidence. His account is an essential contribution to an understanding of Titoism as a political fact and a valuable supplement to H. F. Armstrong's "Tito and Goliath."

But is it possible to give a really adequate explanation of the Yugoslav-Soviet dispute while sticking closely to published sources, naturally preferred by the scholar? In a realistic interpretation, speculation, labeled as speculation, has a place. Avoidance of speculation is itself a speculation that the printed information is both adequate and balanced.

Very little is known about the steps which led to the creation of the Cominform, in September, 1947, and, as noted by Mr. Ulam, a member of the Russian Research Center at Har-

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vard, the Yugoslav spokesmen have avoided raising the curtain on this crucial series of decisions. It is probable, however, that the primary purpose in establishing it was not to offset the attractions of the Marshall Plan and to strengthen Soviet control over the foreign policies of the satellites but, more fundamentally, to speed up the transition from the stage of political coalitions and mixed systems of economy to that of complete integration into the economic and military potential of the Soviet regime. To be ready for the "next round" the Soviet leaders wanted to consolidate Communist control within each satellite state and Soviet control over each satellite party.

AGAIN, is it realistic to ignore almost completely the interplay between Soviet-Yugoslav frictions and Soviet-bloc policies toward the civil war in Greece, even though the published sources are extremely reticent on this subject? The Bled agreement of August, 1947, between Tito and Dimitrov hardly made sense unless it made detailed provision for a coordinated policy in Greece.

It is probable that the Bled agreement provided or assumed the eventual annexation of Greek Macedonia by Yugoslavia and of Greek Thrace by Bulgaria; otherwise it is hard to understand why Dimitrov was willing to promise Bulgarian Macedonia to Yugoslavia. The proclamation of Vafiades "Free Greek" Government, in December, 1947, and the Soviet abstention from recognition of it, may have marked the turning-point in Moscow's decision to tighten the reins on Yugoslav ambitions.

This, rather than Dimitrov's vague endorsement of a Balkan federation, may have been the origin of the Kremlin's warning to the Balkan Communists, in late January, 1948, to work harder at Socialist reconstruction within their own countries

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and to dream less of a Balkan union.

While Mr. Ulam refers to the last-gasp promise of the "Free Greek" Government, in April, 1949, to work for the creation of a "Greater Macedonia" (at Greece's expense), he fails to point out that by then Vafiades had been removed by pro-Moscowite elements and that now the promise of a "Free Macedonia" was being used against Tito, whereas in 1947-48 it had been used by him to support the claims of Yugoslav Macedonia.

Mr. Ulam's account shows rather frequently a certain remoteness from the Yugoslav scene. He assumes, for example, that in 1941-45 the numerous political commissars assigned to Partisan units were not engaged in active fighting; as a matter of fact, casualties were extremely high among them since under guerrilla conditions political and military leadership were inseparable.

Mr. Ulam accepts at face-value the present "non-expansionist" phase of Yugoslav nationalism. A closer study of internal Yugoslav sources would suggest that, while claims to Salonica and Trieste are quiescent in the diplomatic field, they have not been abandoned as a major theme of internal propaganda.

His account of the domestic policies of Yugoslavia since 1948 is sketchy and over-simplified. Contradictory aims which influence relations between the governing party and the governed, as well as the interplay of interest groups within the party, are more complex in their implications than Mr. Ulam appears to assume.